

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method for searching for information within a distributed data processing system, the method comprising:
- obtaining a list of one or more keywords from a search query entered by a user of a first peer node;
- 10 sending a rating request message comprising the list of one more keywords to a server;
- receiving a rating response message comprising a list of node identifiers from the server; and
- 15 initiating a peer-to-peer search from the first peer node by sending a search query message to a plurality of peer nodes, wherein the search query message comprises the search query, and wherein the plurality of peer nodes includes at least one peer node identified in the list of node identifiers from the server.
- 20 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- receiving from a second peer node a search result message for the peer-to-peer search comprising a node identifier for the second peer node; and
- 25 retrieving from the second peer node a file identified by the search result message.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:
capturing a node identifier for the second peer node
from which the file was retrieved; and
storing at the first peer node the node identifier
5 in association with the list of one or more keywords.

4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
generating client rating information at the first
peer node, wherein the client rating information
10 comprises data relating one or more keywords and one or
more captured node identifiers; and
sending the client rating information to the server.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the client rating
15 information comprises data relating file usage statistics
for the retrieved file and one or more captured node
identifiers.

6. The method of claim 3 further comprising:
20 capturing file usage statistics for the retrieved
file; and
storing at the first peer node the file usage
statistics in association with the list of one or more
keywords.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
registering the first peer node with the server.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
30 receiving a rating module from the server; and
installing the rating module on first peer node.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the rating module is installed as part of a process of registering the first peer node with the server.

10. A method for facilitating a search for information within a distributed data processing system, the method comprising:

receiving at a server a rating request message
5 comprising a list of one more keywords from a peer node;
searching a rating database for matching keywords;
retrieving a list of one or more node identifiers
for peer nodes in a peer-to-peer network that are
associated with the matching keywords; and
10 sending to the peer node a rating response message
comprising the list of node identifiers.

11. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

receiving client rating information from the peer
15 node; and
indexing the client rating information from the peer
node with client rating information from additional peer
nodes into the rating database.

20 12. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

initiating a financial transaction for a user or an
owner of the peer node in response to accepting a request
to access the rating database.

25 13. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

registering the peer node at the server.

14. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

downloading a rating module to the peer node.

15. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

identifying the registered peer node as a
subscribing peer node, wherein a subscribing peer node
receives access to the rating database for a periodic
5 fee.

16. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

identifying the registered peer node as a rating
peer node, wherein a rating peer node is allowed to
10 submit client rating information to the server.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

providing the rating peer node with access to the
rating database for no fee.

18. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

providing the rating peer node with access to the
rating database for a predetermined fee.

19. An apparatus for searching for information within a distributed data processing system, the apparatus comprising:

obtaining means for obtaining a list of one or more
5 keywords from a search query entered by a user of a first peer node;

first sending means for sending a rating request message comprising the list of one more keywords to a server;

10 first receiving means for receiving a rating response message comprising a list of node identifiers from the server; and

initiating means for initiating a peer-to-peer search from the first peer node by sending a search query message to a plurality of peer nodes, wherein the search query message comprises the search query, and wherein the plurality of peer nodes includes at least one peer node identified in the list of node identifiers from the server.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

second receiving means for receiving from a second peer node a search result message for the peer-to-peer search comprising a node identifier for the second peer
25 node; and

retrieving means for retrieving from the second peer node a file identified by the search result message.

21. The apparatus of claim 20 further comprising:

first capturing means for capturing a node identifier for the second peer node from which the file was retrieved; and

5 first storing means for storing at the first peer node the node identifier in association with the list of one or more keywords.

22. The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:

10 generating means for generating client rating information at the first peer node, wherein the client rating information comprises data relating one or more keywords and one or more captured node identifiers; and

15 second sending means for sending the client rating information to the server.

23. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the client rating information comprises data relating file usage statistics for the retrieved file and one or more captured node
20 identifiers.

24. The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:

second capturing means for capturing file usage statistics for the retrieved file; and

25 second storing means for storing at the first peer node the file usage statistics in association with the list of one or more keywords.

25. The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

30 registering means for registering the first peer node with the server.

26. The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

third receiving means for receiving a rating module
from the server; and

5 installing means for installing the rating module on
first peer node.

27. The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the rating module
is installed as part of a process of registering the

10 first peer node with the server.

28. An apparatus for facilitating a search for information within a distributed data processing system, the apparatus comprising:

first receiving means for receiving at a server a
5 rating request message comprising a list of one more keywords from a peer node;

searching means for searching a rating database for matching keywords;

10 retrieving means for retrieving a list of one or more node identifiers for peer nodes in a peer-to-peer network that are associated with the matching keywords; and

sending means for sending to the peer node a rating response message comprising the list of node identifiers.

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29. The apparatus of claim 28 further comprising:

second receiving means for receiving client rating information from the peer node; and

20 indexing means for indexing the client rating information from the peer node with client rating information from additional peer nodes into the rating database.

30. The apparatus of claim 28 further comprising:

25 initiating means for initiating a financial transaction for a user or an owner of the peer node in response to accepting a request to access the rating database.

31. The apparatus of claim 28 further comprising:
registering means for registering the peer node at
the server.

5 32. The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising:
downloading means for downloading a rating module to
the peer node.

10 33. The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising:
first identifying means for identifying the
registered peer node as a subscribing peer node, wherein
a subscribing peer node receives access to the rating
database for a periodic fee.

15 34. The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising:
second identifying means for identifying the
registered peer node as a rating peer node, wherein a
rating peer node is allowed to submit client rating
information to the server.

20 35. The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising:
first providing means for providing the rating peer
node with access to the rating database for no fee.

25 36. The apparatus of claim 34 further comprising:
second providing means for providing the rating peer
node with access to the rating database for a
predetermined fee.

37. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use within a distributed data processing system for searching for information, the computer program product comprising:

5 instructions for obtaining a list of one or more keywords from a search query entered by a user of a first peer node;

 instructions for sending a rating request message comprising the list of one more keywords to a server;

10 instructions for receiving a rating response message comprising a list of node identifiers from the server; and

 instructions for initiating a peer-to-peer search from the first peer node by sending a search query message to a plurality of peer nodes, wherein the search query message comprises the search query, and wherein the plurality of peer nodes includes at least one peer node identified in the list of node identifiers from the server.

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38. The computer program product of claim 37 further comprising:

 instructions for receiving from a second peer node a search result message for the peer-to-peer search comprising a node identifier for the second peer node; and

25 instructions for retrieving from the second peer node a file identified by the search result message.

39. The computer program product of claim 38 further comprising:

instructions for capturing a node identifier for the second peer node from which the file was retrieved; and

5 instructions for storing at the first peer node the node identifier in association with the list of one or more keywords.

40. The computer program product of claim 39 further comprising:

instructions for generating client rating information at the first peer node, wherein the client rating information comprises data relating one or more keywords and one or more captured node identifiers; and

15 instructions for sending the client rating information to the server.

41. The computer program product of claim 40 wherein the client rating information comprises data relating file usage statistics for the retrieved file and one or more captured node identifiers.

42. The computer program product of claim 39 further comprising:

25 instructions for capturing file usage statistics for the retrieved file; and

instructions for storing at the first peer node the file usage statistics in association with the list of one or more keywords.

43. The computer program product of claim 37 further comprising:

instructions for registering the first peer node with the server.

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44. The computer program product of claim 37 further comprising:

instructions for receiving a rating module from the server; and

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instructions for installing the rating module on first peer node.

45. The computer program product of claim 44 wherein the rating module is installed as part of a process of registering the first peer node with the server.

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46. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use within a distributed data processing system for facilitating a search for information, the computer program product comprising:

- 5 instructions for receiving at a server a rating request message comprising a list of one more keywords from a peer node;
- instructions for searching a rating database for matching keywords;
- 10 instructions for retrieving a list of one or more node identifiers for peer nodes in a peer-to-peer network that are associated with the matching keywords; and
- instructions for sending to the peer node a rating response message comprising the list of node identifiers.

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47. The computer program product of claim 46 further comprising:

- instructions for receiving client rating information from the peer node; and
- 20 instructions for indexing the client rating information from the peer node with client rating information from additional peer nodes into the rating database.

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48. The computer program product of claim 46 further comprising:

- instructions for initiating a financial transaction for a user or an owner of the peer node in response to accepting a request to access the rating database.

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49. The computer program product of claim 46 further comprising:

instructions for registering the peer node at the server.

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50. The computer program product of claim 49 further comprising:

instructions for downloading a rating module to the peer node.

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51. The computer program product of claim 49 further comprising:

instructions for identifying the registered peer node as a subscribing peer node, wherein a subscribing peer node receives access to the rating database for a periodic fee.

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52. The computer program product of claim 49 further comprising:

instructions for identifying the registered peer node as a rating peer node, wherein a rating peer node is allowed to submit client rating information to the server.

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53. The computer program product of claim 52 further comprising:

instructions for providing the rating peer node with access to the rating database for no fee.

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54. The computer program product of claim 52 further comprising:

instructions for providing the rating peer node with access to the rating database for a predetermined fee.